

November 23, 2021

Senior Housing Alternatives Study Committee

Special Meeting Minutes

Meeting hosted via Zoom and in the town hall annex.

Call to order: The meeting was called to order at 9:37am by Chairperson Stave.

Roll Call: Sondra Astor Stave, Eric Trott, Aline Hoffman, Valdis Vinkels, Dick Brand, Christine Pattee, John Twerdy

Adoption of Minutes: A motion was made by Pattee and seconded by Twerdy to adopt the meeting minutes of October 25, 2021 as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Final review and comment on Report:

One question was submitted by the former Town Council Chair about how the average housing prices were calculated for the Flanders Woods project. Staff responded to the inquiry. An average was calculated based upon sales listing from various real estate platforms.

Christine asked if the cover page of the survey (letter of introduction) could be included in the appendix. This will be addressed in the final copy.

Christine requested that clarification be provided in the memorandum on page 3 with respect to the number of households surveyed, number of total households in Coventry with +60 year olds, and +65 year olds. A typo on the third line was also noted for correction. All of these will be addressed in the final copy.

Eric described the results of some recent conversations between the Town and a developer who specializes in senior housing projects. The developer indicated that their minimum threshold for a project is 20,000 of seniors within a 5 mile radius of a potential project. The Bolton Gateway node may be a candidate, but the developer suggested that it is still short of the target. This provides some context for how Coventry fits a developer's priorities when Towns are targeted for projects.

Eric discussed the work that will be done in early 2022 with the preparation of an Affordable Housing Plan via a State Department of Housing Grant. A consultant will be hired to assist with preparation of the Plan. It is expected to be completed by June 2022. The SHASC Report will serve as an important foundation to the new Plan.

The future role of the Committee was discussed. The Council's formal charge of the Committee has been met with the completion of the Report. It was indicated by the Town Manager that he will be working with the new Town Council to set their goals for the next two years in the coming weeks. Senior housing needs is one of the community priorities that will be considered

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by the new Council. More guidance will be provided by the Manager in early 2022. The Committee may be put on pause while the priorities are being set and the work on the Affordable Housing Plan occurs.

A discussion on how the community will need to balance the needs of senior and family affordable housing occurred. The reality of a community stigma towards affordable housing may be an issue that will need to be addressed. This can be countered by education and advocacy to provide a context and perspective on the subject. It is important that the Plan of Conservation and Development supports the creation of more affordable housing, which will serve as a foundation for future actions.

Dick inquired about road infrastructure design flexibility with future projects. Eric responded that the preparation of the Affordable Housing Plan will also involve examining the Zoning Regulations to determine what improvements are necessary from a permitting standpoint. New Design Guidelines will likely be created that will provide a 'recipe' for a future developer on how a proposed project will harmonize with the neighborhood. The work that was done to prepare the Incentive Housing Zone (IHZ) Regulations may provide a good template since a great deal of work was done on this when the IHZ draft was prepared.

Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 10:35am.

Respectfully submitted,

Eric Trott

Director of Planning and Development